

# City of La Verkin

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## La Verkin City Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 1, 2014 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, 111 S. Main, LaVerkin, Utah

**Present:** Mayor Kerry Gubler; Council-Members: Brandon Stephenson, Richard Hirschi, Ken Hooten, Chantelle Browning, and Randy Reeve; Staff: Kyle Gubler, Derek Imlay, Troylinn Benson, Kevin Bennett, Chief Ben Lee, and Christy Ballard; Public: John & Rose Valenti, Welton Myers, Nancy Jerome-UDOT, Zelda & Larry Stott, James Cowley, Robert & Adrienne Johns, Judy Abraham, Jessica Campbell, Jeanette & Karl Benson, Susan Mangum, Brittney Stewart, and Tyler Turner-Civil Science UDOT.

**A. Called to Order** – Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance by Ken Hooten at 6:00pm.

**B. Presentation:**

1. Neighborhood Watch Program

Karl Benson passed out a handout with information on Neighborhood Watch programs.

There have been several incidences around town in the last few months which have caused some people to worry about not only their safety, but the safety of the widows in the community. A neighborhood watch program has been set up to help establish better communication with people in the neighborhood, the community, and the city personnel.

The Bensons held a meeting that Chief Lee was able to attend. He gave them suggestions and listened to their concerns. They also met with Kyle Gubler to discuss some concerns and he too expressed some support. They have received information from the National group and have been operating since the first of August. Window stickers and official signs have been purchased. They were told by Kyle that the City has poles for the signs to go on and staff will hang them up along the boundaries of their program. The area their group covers is roughly Center Street and 200 N to State Street and 100 E. The area is divided up and each section has a caption that has a calling tree to relay information.

The reason they are here tonight is to propose, on page 2 of the handout, the Neighborhood Watch Program be an adjunct citizen group that could work with City Officials to establish better lines of communication both ways to make this community a safer place to live. It also helps with city improvement days, child fingerprinting, and those types of things.

They would also like to expand the program into other neighborhoods. Having the approval of the City Council would help establish those groups and hopefully prevent wildcat groups from forming.

Mr. Benson was part of a neighborhood watch program in Mesa Arizona who met several times a year with police departments, fire departments, and elected officials. It helped establish a very good relationship between those departments and the citizens.

The group would also like to use Wanlass Park or 111 South Main building for meetings and not be charged. The group has paid for the signs and would continue to do so, there would only be a deminimis cost to the City.

Councilman Hooten asked what the process would be to extend the program to the rest of the community.

Karl replied they would need to find a group of people or at least one person from different areas that was concerned. This is where having the City involved would help. They could help get these people together and let them know where the resources are.

Councilman Hirschi asked if Mr. Benson's group met at a specific time.

Karl answered they do not.

Councilman Stephenson asked what was meant by establishing lines of communication with the police and other city officials.

Karl said that it has been very difficult to get in touch with someone to report incidences happening because our police department is so small. One of the first things they would want is to know what number to call, who to ask for and how to get ahold of an officer. A phone number has been given to the group but it has not been very effective.

Councilman Hirschi reported there is a dispatch number that is for non-emergency situations where an officer can be sent out.

Mr. Benson said that is the number they have tried and it hasn't been very effective.

Councilwoman Browning asked how many members the group had.

Mr. Benson answered there are 5 captains, 10 families and additional volunteers who have been helping.

Walton Meyers is from the opposite side of town, and he is helping to organize a watch group also. It is being set up through the LDS Church. They are using block captains and would like to be part of the communications as well. They would like to get a radio system for communicating.

Councilman Stephenson asked what the duties of captains were and if anyone patrols.

Mr. Benson replied a calling tree has been established, any information goes through the captains whether down to the families/volunteers or up to the other captains. There has not been a patrol set up but they would like to have certain times, such as when school gets out, that they did have people on the street.

Kyle mentioned signing up to receive Reverse 911. Chief Kuhlmann explained how that program works.

Adrienne Johns stated she has Reverse 911 and the only notice she has gotten are flood warnings even though her neighborhood has had a shooting.

Mayor Gubler thanked Mr. Benson for the presentation. He feels there are some concerns with liability of having the City sponsor Neighborhood Watch based on incidents in other areas, but does agree Neighborhood Watch is a positive program and the City would benefit from having it in each neighborhood. They should continue to coordinate with Chief Lee.

Judy Abraham is a block captain. She would like to use the City Park for Neighborhood Watch events without a charge. Neighborhood Watch does not raise money so any expense is paid by the members.

Mayor Gubler will need to check into it but doesn't think waiving that fee for an event that benefits the entire community will be a problem.

Walton Meyers' group would like to help people with emergency preparedness.

Chief Lee gave the information to register with Reverse 911 and will follow up with getting Mr. Benson the correct phone number for non-emergencies.

- C. **Consent Agenda:** (Items on the consent agenda may not require discussion. These items will be a single motion unless removed at the request of the Mayor or City Council.)
1. Declarations of conflict of interest
  2. Agenda
  3. Minutes: September 17, 2014 regular meeting minutes
  4. Review Invoices and Checks: \$189,586.56

**Motion was made by Councilman Brandon Stephenson to approve the consent agenda as written including the September 17, 2014 regular meeting minutes and the checks and invoices in the amount of \$189,586.56, second by Councilman Richard Hirschi. Roll Call Vote: Reeve-yes, Hooten-yes, Stephenson-yes, Hirschi-yes, Browning-yes. Motion carried unanimously.**

**D. Committee Reports:**

1. Planning Commission – The meeting was last week and they discussed vacation rentals. There are several in the community already so they would like to regulate them. It will come before the City Council for final approval. Kevin reviewed classes attended at the ULCT.
2. Water Board – The next meeting is in October.
3. Fire District-Chief Kuhlmann reported even with the weather cooling down and the moisture we received, calls have still been up. The Fire Board has approved 6 new part time positions. The new non-emergency vehicle should be here next week. It is a Sprinter van. The fee for using this service has yet to be determined. This type of service requires only an endorsement on the driver's license and a business license, it really isn't regulated. When everything is ready the Fire District will let the nursing homes and businesses that may need this type of service know they are able to assist them.

Councilman Hirschi asked the status of Hurricane becoming part of the Fire District.

Chief Kuhlmann reported there was a work session with Hurricane and they toured 3 of the 5 fire Stations and discussed some of the challenges they are facing. The City Council did pass 4-0 during the City Council meeting to reunite with the Fire District. There is a study session this month to work out the details for that transition.

4. Sewer Board-Blair reported that billing issues and some commercial establishments the District has were discussed at the last meeting. The District should finish cleaning out Hurricane this year and then they will start back over with Toquerville in the spring. There is one more cutting of hay for the season.
5. Community Garden- Richard reported the lines and plants have all been pulled.

Mayor Gubler mentioned the City is looking for a couple of people willing to oversee the community garden next year.

**E. Citizen Comment & Request for Future Agenda Items:**

Robert Johns is part of the Neighborhood Watch. He has utilized the Reverse 911 and found it to be very cumbersome and not productive with the type of events they would be interested in such as neighborhood violence, shootings, and fire. He would like to consult again with Chief Lee about some of the liaison problems. Their mission is to be eyes and ears.

The dispatch number was unproductive. It took his wife 10-12 minutes just to get through the question and answer process. During the evening and weekends that is the primary contact site. He feels with help from the Chief they could smooth out the information sharing process and if they do see reportable offenses they could report it to the Chief.

The second item is CERT training. Last year they did get 15 signatures for that training but it just disappeared. There was never a training scheduled. He would like to see that training take place and would also like to see the awareness level with the Council. This is really important for the community.

He and his wife donated a small strip of land for a neighborhood garden close to 145 N. Main. He is really looking for some help and motivation to get some CERT training. He knows there was a good effort a couple of years ago and a lot of people received training.

Mayor Gubler thanked Mr. Johns for the information and will look into it.

Walton Meyers is trying to establish two things here in La Verkin. One is a small manufacturing company to manufacture energy efficient devices and two, is a non-profit organization called Southern Utah Preparedness Co-op. This organization will create growing houses, which are different than green houses, where some of the energy devices he manufactures will make the lighting so they will be internally heated and grow year round. The produce will be marketed through the Co-Op members through a farmers market. The property they are interested in is located on State Street and he wondered if that would be an okay place for a farmers market and if irrigation water could get into the building.

Mayor Gubler suggested contacting Derek Imlay or Kyle Gubler at the City office for help in answering those questions.

Jim Cowley-There is a new radio station (104.5) in Hurricane that is ran by the City with public information. On that station they mentioned CERT training will be in October in Hurricane, he thought the date was October 23<sup>rd</sup> but was not sure.

Jeanette Benson-Thanked the City for getting a street light turned on for the Campbell's on 130 North. However, there are two lights on that street and the one closer to their home is the one they would like on.

Kyle will look into it. It is City policy that street lights do not get turned on until there are home by it because each light costs the City money when on.

#### **F. Business:**

1. Discussion and possible action to act as sponsor for a CDBG application for an expansion to the La Verkin fire station.

Chief Kuhlmann said the three story hotel in La Verkin as well as the high school requires some different fire protection for operations. The closest apparatus is out by Wal Mart and we need something closer however, there is no place big enough to house the apparatus.

In 2010 La Verkin City did a survey which resulted in a CDBG approval for city wide funding for a project that had a city wide impact for \$200,000 for one year or \$300,000 for multiple years.

Unfortunately that grants ends this year and does not leave enough time to go through the process of taking advantage of the grant. So he is here tonight to see if the City is interested in going through that process again with help from the Fire District. The District would cover all of the expenses.

It will require another survey be done, which the Fire District would help with participation as well as the cost. It will also require Kyle to attend a work shop on how to apply and for the City to fill out an application and attend the review. If funding is granted it will require someone to attend a granting workshop and public hearings then the project has 18 months to be completed. The District would match the amount of the grant.

The District would like to add a bay onto the existing fire station by going to the west that would be long enough for an extended apparatus, extend the two existing bays to the north making the 70 foot depth, and removing the bay furthest to the east making them offices and crew quarters so the station would be a fully functioning fire station. They would also like to pave the section of road in front of the station, all at no cost to La Verkin.

Kyle said that because it would be La Verkin's building, they need to be the sponsoring agency. The trainings/workshops are required and he goes every year.

Chief Kuhlmann said that the intent, if the funding is approved, to go back to the CIB for funding for the apparatus. The CIB grants are usually a 50/50 split so the District would get a loan for their portion. The interest rate on those loans is currently 1.5% for 20 years.

**Motion was made by Councilman Brandon Stephenson to sponsor the CDBG application for an expansion to the La Verkin fire station, second by Councilman Randy Reeve. Roll Call Vote: Browning-yes, Hirschi-yes, Stephenson-yes, Hooten-yes, Reeve-yes. Motion carried unanimously.**

2. Discussion and possible action to approve Resolution No. R-2014-09; A resolution authorizing and approving a Cooperative Agreement with the Utah Department of Transportation for the replacement and cost-sharing of a drain system crossing SR-9 at 100 South.

Mayor Gubler explained this item has been discussed in a previous meeting and is now before the Council in resolution form.

Nancy Jerome with the Utah Department of Transportation and Tyler Turner with Civil Science Engineer are at the meeting to answer any questions.

There are two locations with drainage issues, 170 South will be taken care of by UDOT and 100 South will be half UDOT and half the City. The City's portion will be due on or before July 15, 2015.

Nancy reported UDOT is willing to help pay for as much as they are because the project is being funded with money that has been saved from other projects. It was not on UDOT's schedule where La Verkin City could see the project was coming up allowing them to set aside some funds to improve their facilities. Every city has problem with money and they realize the burden UDOT has put on La Verkin with this project, but SR9 really needs it.

She cautioned the City to be very cognizant of building plans and additions that could affect particularly the drainage but anything else that is on the State Highway's system. That is what has created the situation on 170 south.

There is also a large drainage problem at 100 South that UDOT will pay for. They are asking the City to pay for half of the cross drain system at that location because it is the City's but UDOT does use that system as well.

It will be a flat fee to the City that is due by July 15, 2015 so if it needs to be included in next year's budget it can.

Councilwoman Browning pointed out a grammatical error on page 1, fourth whereas, the has needs to be removed.

**Motion was made by Councilman Ken Hooten to approve Resolution No. R-2014-09 authorizing and approving a Cooperative Agreement with Utah Department of Transportation for the replacement and cost sharing of a drain system crossing SR-9 at 100 South in the dollar amount of \$11,408.25, second by Councilman Brandon Stephenson. Roll Call Vote: Stephenson-yes, Hooten-yes, Reeve-yes, Browning-yes, Hirschi-yes. Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Turner said the project will start in April and take 2-3 months.

## **G. Staff. Mayor & Council Reports:**

*City Administrator- Kyle Gubler*

October 11<sup>th</sup> is the State Street Clean-up day.

The hotel has slowed down a little. There are some items on the interior of the building that need to be brought up to code and the landscaping needs to be complete.

Three Points Center is open, which is a residential treatment center located at the old Cross Creek building. The Manor building also has a treatment center coming in soon.

George Rodinos has purchased the property north of the Post Office and plans to build a restaurant there.

Councilman Hirschi mentioned the City needs to make sure building on that property will not affect the drainage for State Street.

The St. George-Zion Transit plan will be at the next City Council meeting to make a presentation. Kyle attended a round table discussion with Congressman Stewart. One of the hot topics was land use and who should control the land.

*Public Safety- Chief Ben Lee*

Chief thanked the Neighborhood Watch for their invitation to work with them. There have been some frustrations with communication. The dispatch phone number is 435-634-5730. Due to the fact the police department has no secretary; they use St. George Dispatch for all of their incidences, both emergency and non-emergency. There has been some trouble with the office line so Chief Lee has had all of the calls transferred to his cell phone.

The Annual Beer Tax Funds report has been completed. It is a requirement to qualify for future funds from the State. These funds are used for alcohol related incidences.

Officer Bulkley has completed training for the Criminal Justice Access through the State system. Chief is in the process of completing an audit for that.

Chief has taken the euthanasia course so the shelter is now certified to preform those when necessary.

Councilwoman Browning has had people contact her about the inmates walking the dogs along State Street unsupervised and wondered if the police department has had any complaints.

Chief Lee replied that he has received several calls. The department has been trying to educate the citizens through their facebook page. The inmates have been directed on what route to take when walking the dogs, and also what is expected of them when they are at the shelter and with the public works department. There is not someone supervising them all of the time. The inmates do have to meet certain criteria before they are allowed into this program. They cannot be violent offenders.

Councilwomen Browning stated that she appreciates the effort in trying to save money and understands the inmates are low risk but they have broken the law. She wonders about not only the public perception but also the liability of the City should anything happen. She does not think this should be happening and feels once more citizens find out about it they will not be happy either.

Councilman Hirschi has talked with the inmates a few times, one of which was being released the following day. Anything can happen but he feels they are pretty safe however, he does understand the citizens concern with seeing them walking on the streets unsupervised.

Councilman Reeve has had a few phone calls as well; he is still on the fence about it. He feels the program should keep moving forward and see where it progresses to.

Councilman Hooten has not received any phone calls. His experience has been a positive one. Perhaps when citizens call in we could encourage them to volunteer at the shelter.

Chief Lee added that the majority of time the inmates are at the shelter the animal control officer is there also. He appreciates the feedback on the program.

Jeanette Benson-verified the dispatch number and reported that is the number they were having the issue with. It felt like they were being interrogated with all of the questions being asked. By the time the questions were over it had been like 45 minutes.

Mayor Gubler replied staff will see if they can improve that.

Chief Kuhlmann told Mrs. Benson if she could provide him with the date and time that call was made he is on the advisory board and they will review that call.

Councilman Hirschi mentioned when the inmates are with Derek's crew they are supervised.

Derek stated they are supervised 100% of the time on Tuesdays and Thursday but only about 25% of the time on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Susan Mangum-Does not approve of criminals on the street. She has been in an abusive situation and has teenage daughters and does not feel right about it.

*Director of Operations-Derek Imlay*

Ashley had his surgery yesterday and is home. It was worse than originally thought. Estimated recovery time is 2-3 months at least.

WCWCD went off line and opened the diversion dam due to the amount of the rain we received. It cleared out a lot of debris. The irrigation was off from Saturday to Tuesday morning.

The City has used 140 acre feet of water, which is half of what is normally used by this point in the month. We have used a little more than half of the allotted amount for the year and the water is contracted to go out November 15<sup>th</sup>. We do leave it in until the first freeze.

The heavy rain has brought on drainage issues that the crew is working on and there are still streets that need to be cleaned. Right now they are replacing a drain line in Vintage Park.

Thanked Chief Lee for the use of the inmates. He understands it is a sensitive subject but it has given the public works department two free employees. They have been a tremendous help in cleaning the curb and gutter. To rent a machine that sweeps the streets is \$13,000 per week.

Jeanette Benson-Feels that it is a wonderful idea for the City to use the prisoners but they do need to be supervised or not used. This is what Neighborhood Watch is all about. She doesn't like the idea at all of not having them supervised.

She also wondered why this information is going on facebook and not the City website.

Kyle answered that when information is put on the website it costs the City to have someone put it there and the sight is only getting 40-50 hits per month. The facebook page is free and gets 600-700 hits per month.

You can access the facebook page through the main page of La Verkin's website, on the right hand side.

*Treasurer-Troylinn Benson*

Rocky Mountain Power has a crew in La Verkin trimming trees out of their power lines. They will be putting a notice on the doors of citizens whose trees will be getting trimmed.

The financial report will be at the next meeting.

Mayor Gubler-La Verkin Elementary school has invited the Councilmembers to the Read to Lead day on October 29<sup>th</sup> from 10-11am, they also sent a thank you note for the donation to that program.

*Browning*-The Youth City Council conference has been postponed until the spring. Mosquito Abatement has tested 452 vials this year versus 503 last year and there have been 10 positive pools this year versus 51 last year. In Utah there has only been 1 human case. If anyone does need to report mosquito issues please use Mosquito Abetments website.

*Hirschi*-Nothing further to report.

*Stephenson*-The Beautification Committee met to discuss the upcoming State Street Clean-up and Outstanding Citizen in the Community. This is to honor citizens of the community who have done something above and beyond the norm. If anyone knows of anyone they would like to nominate for this award give the name to Kyle Gubler.

The pharmacist at Farmers Market noticed a person on the ground in front of the redbox and performed CPR to get him breathing again saving his life.

*Hooten*-Thanked Chief Kuhlmann for the outstanding job that he and his personnel do. A lot of times citizens don't see all of the work he does for not only La Verkin but all of the surrounding communities.

*Reeve*-Volleyball starts tomorrow and flag football starts next Tuesday.

**H. Adjourn:**

**Motion was made by Councilman Brandon Stephenson to adjourn, second by Councilman Randy Reeve. Motion carried unanimously at 7:25pm.**

Minutes were taken on behalf of the City Recorder by Christy Ballard.

November 5, 2014  
Date Approved

ATTEST:

Kyle Gubler  
Kyle Gubler  
City Recorder

Kerry T. Gubler  
Mayor Kerry T. Gubler